S. A. 399. 669 1710

A

# SERMON

Preach'd at the

## Pariſh - Church

AT

## *Ramden Bell-Houſe* in *Eſſex*,

On the 20th Day of *January*, being the publick Thankſgiving Day for his Majeſty's ſafe Arrival in this Kingdom, and his eaſy and peaceable Acceſſion to the Throne.

By ALEXANDER JEPHSON, A. M.
Rector of the ſaid Pariſh.

*LONDON:*
Printed for *T. Varnam* and *J. Osborn* at the *Oxford-Arms* in *Lombard-ſtreet*. 1715.

BRITISH MUSEUM

## ISAIAH XLIII. iii, iv.

*I gave Egypt for thy ranſom, Ethiopia and Saba for thee.*

*Since thou waſt precious in my ſight thou haſt been honourable, and I have loved Thee, therefore will I give Men for thee, and People for thy life.*

GOD, as He is the Creator and Governour of all the World, is Good, Gracious, and Merciful to all his Creatures; He loves to ſee the Works of his own Hand purſuing thoſe regular Meaſures and Motions wherewith they were at firſt actuated; neither does He, without the greateſt reluctancy, afflict or puniſh any of them, unleſs it be ſometimes either for the Correction and Amendment of his Servants; or when He baffles and diſappoints the Enterpri-

zes of the Wicked, when they are levell'd at the ruin and deſtruction of His own peculiar People. When indeed the profane part of Mankind combine to vex, moleſt, and harraſs the true profeſſors of God's Holy Religion, then God ſhews the preference to His own; Then all ſuch looſe and extravagant Miſcreants appear baſe and vile in God's ſight, and generally become the objects of his ſevere Wrath and Vengeance.

God ſubverts one Nation for the ſafety of another; and ſometimes reſcues them out of the hands of their Enemies ſo wonderfully and miraculouſly, as if He had created them a ſecond time out of nothing. *I gave Egypt for thy ranſom; Ethiopia and Saba for thee.* And this was fulfilled either when God for the ſake of his People *Iſrael* ſlew all the firſt-born of *Egypt*, and Drowned *Pharaoh* and all his mighty Hoſt in the *Red Sea*; or when *Eſarhaddon* came againſt *Jeruſalem* to revenge the great ſlaughter which his Father *Senacherib*'s Army receiv'd by the Angel of God, who ſlew in one Night One Hundred Eighty five Thouſand, and ſo raiſed the Siege of *Jeruſalem*. *Eſarhaddon* therefore coming to revenge this Diſgrace, was diverted by God, and directed to employ his Forces againſt *Egypt* and *Ethiopia*, and alſo the *Sabeans* who were their Allies. So that the ſenſe of the whole Text is this, As if God by the mouth of his Prophet ſhould ſay, O my People *Iſrael*, ſince that time that thou waſt precious in my ſight; ſince the time that I called *Abraham* out of *Meſopotamia* into the

the Land of *Canaan*, and made his Poſterity my moſt precious and peculiar Treaſure, I have not failed to ſupport and relieve thee. I have made thee moſt Honourable and Renowned among all Nations that had any Commerce or Traffick with you; and as I did give up and deſtroy *Egypt* for its cruel and ſevere dealings with you, ſo I am ſtill ready to give all your other Enemies to Conqueſt and Servitude; and if you will but Serve and Love me, I will Confound the Devices of all thoſe that deſign or attempt to do you any Miſchief: *For I have loved thee*, and therefore I will ſuffer a great many Men to fall and periſh, rather than you ſhall be any ways incommoded or moleſted.

And now, my Brethren, may not we of the Reformed Religion, eſpecially we of this Nation, make a juſt application of this Text to our ſelves? How often has God defeated the attempts of our implacable Enemies, and brought the Miſchiefs they deſigned us upon themſelves? How often has He given up ſome of the Popiſh Faction to be puniſhed for its Enormities againſt Proteſtants? How often, and by how many trains of amazing Providence, has He demonſtrated that the Church of *England* is dear and precious to Him?

Ever ſince the happy Reformation, the Church of *Rome* has been diving into Hell to find out ſome cunning Devices and Stratagems to eradicate and blow us up: Firſt they ſet their moſt Learned and expert Champions to work, to invent all the plauſible Arguments

poſſible, to entice and allure us back into their *Egypt*; but 'tis well known by any one that has the leaſt taſte of Learning, or made the leaſt proficiency in Reading the Controverſies of thoſe early times, how weak their Arguments are, and how our Writers have made unanſwerable Apologies to vindicate the bleſt Reformation they adhered to, and quite baffled and beat them out of the Field. They were ſo confounded at theſe Defeats, that they reſolved the Sword ſhould make good the Deficiencies of the Pen; whereupon, the Pope, and the reſt of his dire Aſſociates, iſſue out their Bulls and Anathema's, and rouze up the King of *Spain* to aſſiſt them, who ſent *an Invincible Armado* (as they called it) to invade this Kingdom, loaden with innumerable Inſtruments of Cruelty to wreak their Malice upon us. But this great Attempt prov'd abortive, and they receiv'd ſo fatal a Blow, ſo home a Thruſt, that *Spain* has not yet recover'd it, but feels the ſmart thereof to this Day.

The next Effort they made was the *Gun-Powder-Plot*, to blow up the King, Lords and Commons, and ſo in the midſt of the Nation's Amazement and Confuſion, to force Popery upon us; *but* Egypt *was given up for a Ranſom, and the baſe treacherous Crew were deſervedly Executed.*

*Thirdly*, When they found ſo bad Succeſs in their own Contrivances to extirpate and root out the *Northern* Hereſy (as they Blaſphemouſly call the pure and genuine Religion of Chriſt) they privately blew up the Coals of Diſſention among Proteſtants themſelves, ſo

*that*

that an Unnatural and Civil War broke out, and the Breaches were made ſo wide, that they thought we ſhould never be cemented together; they bandied and play'd us like *Tennis-Balls* one againſt another, almoſt to the Deſtructruction of both; ſo that the prevailing Party was ſo exaſperated, and raiſed into ſuch an unparallel'd Paroxiſm, ſuch a monſtrous Fit, and height of Madneſs, that they violently laid Hands on their good King, and murder'd him in the Face of the Sun, and alſo Baniſh'd his Sons and the Church out of the Nation. But ſtill we *were precious in God's Sight*, and an end was put to all thoſe Troubles by the happy Reſtoration of the Royal Family, and with it, of the Church and Antient Government.

At length they got a Popiſh King upon the Throne, whom they buoy'd up with the Principles of Arbitrary Power, and egg'd forward by their pernicious Counſels, to make Havock of the Church and State; and, indeed, he took ſo large Steps towards the Accompliſhment of our Ruin and Deſtruction, that the eagerneſs of his purſuit was, in ſome meaſure, the Cauſe of his Fall. However we were in very great Danger, his Inſtruments and Tools to execute his baſe, unworthy, and treacherous Deſigns, were all either biggotted Papiſts, or Proteſtants of ſuch debauch'd Lives and Principles, as had not the leaſt Spark of Honour, Honeſty or Religion; all Patrons and Abettors of that Barbarous and Bloody Perſecution, that at that time was ſo raging and impetuous in *France*. The Danger

we

we were in, tho' it was not ſo ſudden as the Blow which the *Gun-Powder-Plot* would have given, had it taken Effect, yet it ſeem'd altogether as certain; nothing but the Interpoſition of Divine Power could prevent either. 'Tis not much above twenty years ago, 'tis freſh in all our Memories, and I hope we ſhall never forget with what a full carreer Popery advanc'd towards us; the driving was like *Jehu* the Son of *Nimſhi*, for it drave on furiouſly: 'Tis not long, I ſay, ſince our Religion and Liberties were like poor Orphans, without a Father or Friend to protect 'em, and juſt ready upon the Wing to take their Flight, and bid a long farewel to theſe then Melancholly Iſlands: Alas! poor *Ireland* already had the Skean brandiſh'd at every Proteſtant's Throat; they only wanted the Word to fall on; and unhappy *Britain* lay ſunk and diſpirited in a moſt dejected and forlorn Condition, and ſaw the Chains and Fetters that were prepared for her to put on.

We ſaw our Colleges, thoſe Fountains of Learning, poiſon'd with the putrid Breath of *Baals Prieſts*. We ſaw our *Biſhops* Impriſon'd, and Indicted as *Malefactors*, whoſe only Crime was their oppoſing their Perſecutors Excluſion from the Throne.

We ſaw Maſs-Houſes, thoſe Temples of worſe than *Pagan* Idolatry, ſet up and countenanc'd in the Metropolis of the Kingdom. The good Church of *England*, which is the great Bulwark and Support of the Reformed Religion, was Herſelf defenceleſs, and thought to have fled for Refuge and Shelter into

into Foreign Countries, as ſhe was forced to do in the *Marian Perſecution*. We could not tell how ſoon *Dagon* would be ſet up in the preſence of the *Ark* of the Lord, nor how ſoon Popery would take poſſeſſion of our Churches; nor how ſoon our Bibles would be pluck'd out of our Hands and commanded to be burnt. That profound piece of Idolatry, the carrying the Hoſt in Proceſſion, was daily expected in our Streets; And what muſt the Conſequence of that be, but Flames and Faggots for refuſing to kneel down and Worſhip it. In a Word, the Sluices of Popery were juſt ready to be open'd, and come in upon us with an impetuous Inundation, and an irreſiſtable Torrent; and to compleat our Miſery, and entail it on our Poſterity, a *Sham-Heir* to the Crown was foiſter'd upon us, to exclude his Daughters becauſe they were Proteſtants: But it was juſt with God that one of theſe Princeſſes ſhould be a Scourge to that Tyrant whoſe Meaſures her Father took. Ah! had ſhe not been unhappily byaſs'd by Evil Counſel, and unfortunatly prevail'd upon to withdraw the Rod too ſoon, before ſhe had ſufficiently humbled her proud Adverſary, The Monſieur was upon his Knees a trembling, quaking, and begging Forgiveneſs for his former Miſdemeanors, juſtly dreading the Severity of the ſubſequent Laſhes: But ſuch was the unlucky malignant Genius of ſome Court Sycophants, that they eaſily gained his Pardon, and brought him into Grace and Favour; ſo that he was, inſtead of being puniſhed, immediately careſs'd

reſs'd and embrac'd as a dear Friend, and let looſe again to play over all his Extravagant Pranks, and to Laugh at the eaſineſs and good Nature of the miſtaken Princeſs, that ſuffer'd him to be reſcued from due Correction. But to return, I'll Appeal to the aking Hearts and dejected Looks, the ſorrowful Countenances and the ſevere Agonies of the perplex'd Souls of every true and ſincere Proteſtant at that time, whether all that I have ſaid be not really matter of Fact, and more than Imaginary Fancy and Surmiſe, as even ſome Caſuiſts that pretend to be Proteſtants have the Confidence to inſinuate.

*We lifted up our Eyes unto the Hills from whence we expected help*; we looked up to Heaven with *Prayers and Tears*; but for a while not the leaſt Glimpſe of Aſſiſtance appear'd; no Signs from Heaven, nor any humane Power or Succour were in our view. Thus Darkneſs and Deſpair overſpread our *Horizon*, and the whole Kingdom was involved in a total Eclipſe of Horror and Confuſion. What if I ſhould reſemble our Caſe then to *Noah in the Ark* a floating over the univerſal Deluge: The Raven that was firſt ſent forth returned no more, but was Drown'd in the boiſterous Surges and raging Billows of Popery; at length the Dove was ſent forth to ſee if there was any abatement of the Waters, and then to our Joy and Comfort, the *Dove* came in to us in the Evening, *and lo, in her Mouth was an Olive Leaf pluck'd off*, a Glorious

Glorious Emblem of Victory and Succeſs. That *Dove* was the moſt magnanimous and renowned Hero, the thrice noble, illuſtrious and invincible Prince of *Orange*, who roſe from the *Eaſt*, and rejoic'd with the Sun to begin his Courſe, and to refreſh us with his chearing and enlivening Rays. Oh! how happy were we, (if we had known our Happineſs aright) upon the Arrival of that great Prince, the mighty *William* and His moſt amiable and lovely Conſort Queen *Mary*, both of ever Glorious, Precious and Immortal Memory; whoſe Fame and Glory, and exuberant Merits, ſhall ſend forth a grateful and fragrant Odour from their Urns; ſhall ſmell Sweet, and Bloſſom in the Hearts and Affections of all true *Engliſhmen* and Proteſtants, and ſhall be Eterniz'd in Hiſtory and Chronicle, whilſt thoſe that caſt malignant Glances, and look a-skew on them, deſpiſing and forgetting thoſe gracious Bleſſings and Benefits they ſhed on theſe Nations, ſhall Ingloriouſly Rot in the Duſt, and be Buried in Eternal Oblivion. But to return to that great Prince, and to give you a brief Relation of the wonderful Progreſs he made; whilſt ſome deſponded and deſpair'd, God gave him the Courage and Reſolution to venture his Perſon, to hazard his Fortune, and all that was near and dear to him, for our Preſervation, to reſcue us and the ſinking Proteſtant Intereſt in *Europe*, from Popery, Slavery, and Arbitrary Power; and I hope we ſhall never be ſo ungrateful to God, and to the Memory of

that great Prince, as to forget theſe ineſtimable Benefits, much leſs to kick at the Bleſſings, and to fly from our own Happineſs, and to renounce our ſhare in the Advantages gained by that happy Revolution.

Let *Papiſts* and *Jacobites* open their vile Throats, and ſpue out their poiſonous Invectives againſt that miraculous Deliverance, they only blow the Trumpet of their own Infamous Villanies, like ſo many Snakes and Toads, a hiſſing and croaking in the ſtinking miry Puddles of *Popery*, from whence they ſuck'd in their pernicious Principles, and which bred in them that Noiſom Snivel which flows down ſo plentifully from their Venemous Tongues. They only act the art of that old Serpent, who is always a fretting, and murmuring, and repining at the Wonderful Redemption of Mankind, from his own cruel, intolerable, and infernal Thraldom and Vaſſalage.

But away with thoſe Miſcreants, Let us who account the Revolution a great Bleſſing, take another taſte of that pleaſant Joy, and Bask about a while in the enlivening Rays, and happy Sunſhine that then o'erſpread and diffuſed themſelves all over our Hemiſphere. I confeſs I cannot reflect on the Circumſtance of thoſe Times, without being affected with two contrary Motions: For while I recount the diſmal Calamities and Miſeries we were expoſed to, whilſt Popery was rampant and triumphant in the Nation, my Blood

as 'twere Freezes in my Veins: But when I conſider our Deliverance, I am perfectly rapt up into extaſies of Joy, and my Blood recovers its former native heat, and gently glides and circulates thro' its peaceful Channels. Who can forget that King *William*'s Preſence and Arrival cauſed an effuſion of Joy throughout the Nation; and that this was effected without domeſtick ſlaughter and bloodſhed? The farther he advanced into the Country, his Influence was ſtill more and more agreeable to all true Proteſtants. Popery and Idolatry, Slavery and Tiranny, and the ſhades of Error and Superſtition, fled before him, as Miſts and Fogs vaniſh at the approach of the Sun. The Emiſſaries of *Rome*, thoſe foul and ravenous Harpies, thoſe Vermin of Prey, got them away together, and laid them down in their ſecret Dens and Coverts.

The Jeſuits, the Peſt of all Nations, ſculked into Holes and Corners, being worried and haunted with the guilt of their pernicious Counſels, as with ſo many frightful Mormoes and Spectres, whilſt we ſtood ſilent and amazed, like Men tranſported with a pleaſant Dream. For, indeed, our Deliverance was ſo ſudden and ſurprizing, that it wou'd ſcarce allow us time to recollect our Senſes to believe at length that it was real. We thought then we cou'd never Prize and Honour our Gracious Deliverer enough, nor with acclamations of Joy loud enough Welcome the Glorious Prince; We thought the Imperial Crown

of theſe Realms but a ſmall gratuity for the great dangers He expoſed himſelf to for our ſakes, to ſave and ſupport our ſinking tottering State from Ruin and Deſtruction; tho' now we have ſome, (too many, God knows, eſpecially of the younger Fry, of the more looſe and profligate ſort) who to their own immortal Infamy, dare caſt ungrateful and unworthy Reflections on Him and His Government: Not conſidering that our late Gracious Queen of Bleſſed Memory, under God, owed Her Deliverance and Acceſſion to the Throne to that Great Man; and alſo that our preſent Glorious and Renowned Sovereign Lord King *George*, and all the dear Pledges of our future Happineſs in the Illuſtrious Houſe of *Hannover*, and the Proteſtant Line, had been quite excluded, had King *James* and his Popiſh Crew ſucceeded in their Villainous and Deſtructive Deſigns. Oh! How can we therefore ſufficiently prize the greatneſs of that Bleſſing which we this Day enjoy, by thoſe fruſtrations and diſappointments which God was pleaſed to give our implacable Enemies; and on the contrary, by the happy promotion and advancement of the Proteſtant Succeſſion, by which means we hope, and we heartily pray to God, That the Pretender's attempts, or any other in future Generations, as Claiming by Vertue of His Forged and Sham Title, may be for ever bawk'd and defeated; and that our preſent Gracious, Dear and Dread Sovereign Lord King *George* may

long,

long, oh, very long, ſway the Scepter of theſe Kingdoms, and that We and our Poſterity may be bleſt with a Continued and Uninterrupted Succeſſion of Princes in that Royal Proteſtant Family, whilſt the Sun, Moon and Stars afford us their charming Rays, and comfort us with the benign Influences of their Heat and Light.

To conclude all, *God has given Egypt a Ranſom to our King*, by which means he daſh'd the Pretender's Meaſures into pieces, and facilitated and opened a way for his Majeſty's ſafe Acceſſion to the Throne. God *has alſo given Ethiopia and Saba for him*; He has not only diſappointed the Pretender and ruined his Intereſt in *France*, but has alſo influenc'd the three Eſtates of this Realm, by Wiſe, Cautious and Salutary Laws and Statutes, to exclude and reject other undoubted Branches of the Royal Family, becauſe they are tainted and poiſon'd with Popery and Superſtition, ſuch as the Houſes of *Burgundy* and *Savoy*; and all this was happily tranſacted in Favour of our good King and His Illuſtrious Family, becauſe they are Proteſtants, ſincere and true Profeſſors of the Religion of Chriſt; therefore *were they precious in God's ſight, and preferr'd in Honour and Dignity before others*; *Therefore God loved them, and gave Men for them, and People for their Lives.* The warm Beams of God's Favour and Bleſſings ſhine all over their Hemiſphere, whilſt others are enveloped with Darkneſs, and ſurrounded with Bawks and Diſappointments. God is as a Cloud to thoſe Popiſh Families, as he once was

to

to the *Egyptians*, whilſt he appears and affords his Preſence as a Pillar of Fire to the Proteſtant Line, as he alſo did to the *Iſraelites*. God's King muſt ſtand in ſpite of all humane Oppoſition; when God has rejected *Saul*, the Kingdom muſt tranſcend to *David* and his Family; and tho' all *Iſrael* ſet their Faces on *Adonijah* that he ſhould Reign, yet he was rejected and refuſed, and the Kingdom was turned to *Solomon*, for it was his from the Lord.

And now, O moſt gracious and glorious Lord God, give me, one of the meaneſt of thy Miniſters and Ambaſſadors, and theſe thy People, who are here aſſembled together to celebrate this joyful Feſtival, give us leave to make our humble Addreſs, and to offer up our moſt ſincere and hearty Supplications and Prayers at the Footſtool of thy Throne of Grace, in behalf of his Sacred Majeſty, whom thou haſt ſo wonderfully protected, and ſo ſafely conducted to the Throne of theſe Realms; That he and his moſt Illuſtrious Family, may be a laſting Bleſſing, an happy Support and Defence of the Proteſtant Religion, not only in theſe Kingdoms, but alſo in all parts of the World; to remove the Sorrows and Diſtreſſes of thoſe, who have for ſome years groan'd and labour'd under the Barbarous, Cruel, Inhumane and Intollerable Oppreſſions and Perſecutions of Popiſh Tyranny; That as thou, O God, *haſt given Egypt for his Ranſom, as thou haſt rejected Ethiopia and Saba for his ſake*, ſo he may hereafter give a finiſhing ſtroke to what thou haſt begun, and reſcue poor Proteſtants in Foreign Coun-

Countries from the miſerable Calamities of blind Errour and Superſtition; That as thou haſt already weaken'd the Power, broken and baffled the Forces of *France*, in ſeveral Glorious and Signal Victories obtain'd by the undaunted Courage, and invincible Fortitude of our Valiant *Britons*, in Conjunction with our noble Allies, under the moſt Auſpicious Conduct of our Brave *Engliſh Hannibal*; ſo our King may at length make a better Uſe and Improvement of thoſe Conqueſts than hitherto has been made.

And if ever we ſhould again be provoked to engage in a War with *France*, O may our Valiant King out-do the famous Battles of *Creſſy* and *Agincourt*, *Blenheim* and *Ramilies*, and purſue his Conqueſts into the very Bowels of the Enemy's Country, till at length, riding Triumphantly to the Gates of *Paris*, Monſieur may come forth to meet him, and humbly proſtrate himſelf at his Feet, and be glad to Petition to have leave to wear the Crown of *France* as a petty King, and thankfully pay Tribute and Homage to great *George* of *England*, whoſe Perſon and moſt Illuſtrious Family we moſt humbly beſeech thee, O Lord, to protect from all Dangers. Proſper his moſt mild and ſerene Government, and unite the Hearts of his People to him in all Loyalty and Affection, and encline his Heart to Govern his Subjects with all Tenderneſs and Compaſſion, that ſo a Gracious King, and a Loyal People, may for many aud many years enjoy each other with mutual Satisfaction and Comfort; That we may, like *Solomon*, ſay, *Who is ſufficient to go*

*in*

*in and out before so great a People, give therefore thy Servant an Understanding Heart to judge thy People*; and that the People may reciprocally Answer with the Queen of *Sheba*, and say, *'Twas a true Report we heard in this our Land of thy Acts and of thy Wisdom; blessed be the Lord thy God that delighteth in thee, to set thee upon the Throne of Israel; because the Lord loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee King to do Judgment and Justice, and let all the People say*, Amen, Amen.

FINIS.

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